



Town of Arlington
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of the Board of Health
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MEMO

To: Food Establishment Owner/Operator

From: Pdraig Martin, Lead Health Compliance Officer

Date: December 16, 2020

RE: Changes to Food Establishment Operations during COVID-19 – Bar Seating

Town officials continue to monitor the spread of the novel coronavirus, COVID-19, daily and coordinate regionally to make the best decisions for the safety of all our residents. Arlington case counts have grown at an alarming rate over the past two months. The City of Boston reports that the percentage of occupied adult non-surge ICU beds at Boston hospitals is at 90 percent as of December 10, 2020. Due to these increases, and anticipated increases, the Town of Arlington joins the City of Boston, along with mayors and city leaders from Somerville, Newton, Brockton, Lynn, Melrose, and Winthrop to issue new guidance to help curb the spread of COVID-19.

Please be advised, effective Wednesday December 16, **food establishments in Arlington will no longer be permitted to seat customers at the bar.** However, bar areas may be reconfigured to accommodate table seating that complies with all spacing and other requirements in the [COVID-19 safety standards](#). These changes will remain in effect for a minimum of three weeks.

It has come to our attention that the original press release issued by the Town on December 14, 2020, contained language regarding food establishments being able to obtain a waiver for bar seating. This was an error and **the Arlington Health Department will not be issuing waivers for bar seating** while this guidance remains in effect.

For questions regarding this matter, please contact the Health Department at 781-316-3170.